Lastly, the member pressed the need for the establishment of land mortgage banks with a view to improve the economic condition of the ryots.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Kumara Pillai, in your representation you first made suggestions with regard to the expansion of the co-operative department. The Government will carefully consider all those suggestions.

Secondly, you advocated the immediate establishment of land mortgage banks. I would only repeat to you what my predecessor has said and that is, Government will consider that question earnestly.

Then with regard to the suggestion that there is some difficulty felt now in executing awards, it must be due to the circumstance that the relevant provision of the Regulation now in force is not being put into operation. There is a provision in the Regulation which enables the award to be transferred immediately to Dewan Peishkars so that they may take action under the Revenue Recovery Regulation. If that rule is properly availed of, the difficulties you referred to can be remedied.

Government do not think that there is any need to follow your suggestion to give the Co-operative Registrar and his subordinates powers under the Revenue Recovery Regulation. They can only ask the Peishkars to expedite the proceedings under the Revenue Recovery Regulation.

31. Co-operative work among the depressed classes.

MR. V. JOHN (*Nominated*) said that in South Travancore there were about 300 villages of depressed classes, but it was deplorable to see that there were only 9 co-operative societies there—8 in Nanjinad and 1 in Edanad. The fewness in the number of societies was due to the fact that most of the depressed class people were illiterate and ignorant of the benefits of co-operation. Being poor they were also not able to be punctual in monetary transactions with co-operative societies. The Unions and the Inspectors had hardly the time to devote for doing propaganda work by preaching co-operative principles. Their activities were confined to the working of the existing societies. The honorary organisers had no interest or enthusiasm in co-operative work, because they were not adequately encouraged. Payment of travelling allowance to them would create some enthusiasm in them and thereby promote the well-being of the existing societies and also the registration of new societies among depressed classes.

In every co-operative society, able and experienced members for the proper carrying on of its working were necessary. Only such members could be put on the managing committee. They should also know the rules and bye-laws of each society, the methods of convening meetings and carrying on correspondence, the maintenance of the several books and registers and the preparation of the necessary

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returns. For initiating the members of societies in all such items of work, a Group Secretary was absolutely necessary and the member urged the appointment of one for South Travancore.

The Group Secretary could not devote all his time to the working of any particular society. For the well-being of any society, the president, the secretary and the members of the managing committee should also actively work and support the Group Secretary in his activities. With a view to encourage the office-bearers, a small grant should be awarded to each. It would be enough to award it till each society was able to set apart a portion of its profits for meeting the expenditure on account of the pay of staff and bonus to office-bearers. In the interests of the depressed classes, such grants were absolutely necessary.

Lastly, the member suggested the desirability of issuing agricultural loans through co-operative societies. He also requested that the loans issued to societies of depressed classes should be without interest. One main advantage of his proposal was that the repayment of the loan was secure inasmuch as the working of the societies was subjected to periodical inspection by Government officers.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. John, I am very sorry to learn from your statement that, in the two taluks, the number of co-operative societies among depressed classes is so small. I asked the Registrar of Co-operative Societies and he told me that a number of new societies have now sprung up. Government have sanctioned the appointment of 5 group secretaries and they have been asked to work in certain circles where, on account of the large number of societies, they are most needed. I do not think that, having regard to the number of societies in Nanjinad, a group secretary is necessary there now. When the number of societies increases, Government will reconsider that question.

Your suggestions about grants to group secretaries and issue of agricultural loans through co-operative societies for short periods will be noted. Your latter point is receiving some attention at the hands of the authorities concerned. Under the existing Regulation and Rules, you say that the depressed classes are experiencing some difficulty. The question of modifying the rules has been taken up by the Government and I expect that final orders will be passed on it soon. You also suggest that members of the depressed classes should be taught co-operative work. As a matter of fact, that is being often provided for by the societies themselves. In many such societies, the services of a person who does not belong to the depressed classes have been requisitioned for carrying on the work and training up one or two members of the societies. Your suggestion as to the way in which propoganda work should be carried on will also be noted. In the meantime, the Co-operative Department will be instructed as far as possible to carry on intensive propoganda.

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